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DE WTE #1757 1052014  
O 152001Z APR 74  
FM THE SITUATION ROOM //TOHAK05//

TO JERRY BREMER FOR SEC. KISSINGER

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VIA BLACK PATCH WH40976

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APRIL 15, 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: THE SITUATION ROOM

SUBJECT: EVENING NOTES

ISRAELI GOVERNMENT: PRESS QUOTES A LABOR PARTY SOURCE SAYING TODAY THAT HAIFA MAJOR JOSEPH ALMOGI IS THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATE OF THE LABOR PARTY TO FORM THE NEXT ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. AMBASSADOR KEATING SAYS ALTHOUGH IT IS TOO EARLY TO ANTICIPATE LABOR PARTY OPTIONS, RABIN, ALMOGI AND ZADOK ARE CONSIDERED TOP CONTENDERS WITH THE LATTER TWO APPEARING TO BE MORE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL FACTIONS. DEVELOPMENTS INCREASINGLY POINT TO ELECTIONS IN LATE OCTOBER.

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RANGERS FROM TONLE CHAM SAFELY ARRIVE AT AN LOC: OF THE 277 SOUTH VIETNAMESE RANGER'S FROM THE TONLE CHAM BASE, 268 ARRIVED SAFELY AT AN LOC DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS ON APRIL 15. FOUR WERE KILLED AND 35 WERE WOUNDED IN THREE FIREFIGHTS EN ROUTE TO AN LOC. INFORMATION ON THE SUCCESSFUL EXFILTRATION IS BEING TIGHTLY HELD WHILE THE RANGERS ARE DEBRIEFED. THE COMMANDER OF MILITARY REGION 3 IS SUSPICIOUS THAT THE BASE WAS NOT OVERRUN BUT ABANDONED AGAINST HIS ORDERS. DAMAGE FROM GVN RETALIATORY AIR STRIKES ON LOC NINH WAS MODERATE; SOME 15 BUILDINGS WERE DESTROYED. MORE STRIKES AGAINST TARGETS IN NORTHERN TAY NINH PROVINCE ARE SCHEDULED.

\*\*\*\*\*WHSR COMMENT\*\*\*\*\*

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ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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NIGER MILITARY SEIZES POWER: NIGER ARMED FORCES COMMANDER KOUNTCHE HAS CITED THE NECESSITY OF ENDING YEARS OF GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION AND MISMANAGEMENT AS THE REASON FOR HIS COUP. HE

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HAS SUSPENDED THE CONSTITUTION, DISSOLVED THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, AND BANNED ALL POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE COUNTRY. FORMER PRESIDENT DIORI -- IN POWER SINCE NIGER GAINED INDEPENDENCE IN 1960 -- AND HIS TOP OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN PLACED UNDER ARREST. A NEW GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE HAS YET TO BE ANNOUNCED.

CIA COMMENTS THAT KOUNTCHE'S DECISION TO MOVE AGAINST DIORI WAS PROBABLY A CULMINATION OF DISSATISFACTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S LONGSTANDING INABILITY TO IMPROVE NIGER'S CHRONIC ECONOMIC STAGNATION, NOW COMPOUNDED BY THE SERIOUS DROUGHT THAT HAS SPREAD THROUGHOUT MOST OF THE COUNTRY. KOUNTCHE ALSO MAY HAVE BEEN DISPLEASED WITH THE HEAVY FRENCH INFLUENCE THAT PERVADES THE COUNTRY. FRANCE IS THE PRINCIPAL SUPPLIER OF MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID TO NIGER AND A NUMBER OF FRENCH TECHNICIANS VIRTUALLY CONTROLLED THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT IN THEIR CAPACITY AS ADVISERS TO DIORI AND THE MILITARY. ALTHOUGH KOUNTCHE HAS ANNOUNCED THAT NIGER WILL HONOR ITS INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND AGREEMENTS, PROVIDED THEY RESPECT THE INTEREST AND DIGNITY OF THE NIGERIAN PEOPLE. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR HOW HE VIEWS THE MUTUAL DEFENSE PACTS THAT DIORI'S GOVERNMENT SIGNED WITH FRANCE AND LIBYA.

WASHINGTON STAR-NEWS: VIRGINIA ARMAT ASSESSES THE DIZZYING PARADE OF CANDIDATES LINED UP TO SUCCEED POMPIDOU ALMOST TWO WEEKS AFTER HIS DEATH.

GEORGE SHERMAN ASSERTS THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN A DECADE, AMERICAN NUCLEAR DOCTRINE GOVERNING THE POWER EQUATION BETWEEN THE TWO SUPERPOWERS IS CLOUDED IN CONTROVERSY. NOT SINCE MCNAMARA LAUNCHED REFINEMENTS OF THE "MASSIVE RETALIATION" DOCTRINE BACK IN 1962 HAS THE HEAD OF THE PENTAGON CAUSED SUCH A FUROR ON THIS SUBJECT. TODAY, SCHLESINGER IS ACCUSED OF REWRITING SCRIPTURE TO MAKE NUCLEAR WAR PLAUSIBLE.

JEREMIAH O'LEARY REPORTS THAT YOUR CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM ON THE PROSPECTS FOR A SYRIAN-ISRAELI MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT IS BASED LARGELY ON CONCEPTS WHICH THE SYRIAN MISSION TO WASHINGTON DID NOT REJECT LAST WEEK.

NAOMI SCHWIESON REPORTS THAT POMPIDOU'S DEATH NOT ONLY SET OFF A COMPETITION FOR HIS PLACE BUT HAS ALSO RAISED A LONG-RANGE QUESTION, FOR MORE IMPORTANT, ABOUT THE FATE OF "GAULLISM" IN FRANCE, IN EUROPE, AND IN RELATIONS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

A STAR EDITORIAL ON SALT ASSERTS THAT IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, THE RULING OUT FOR THE YEAR OF A COMPREHENSIVE FURTHER AGREEMENT IN SALT WOULD BE DISAPPOINTING. BUT GIVEN THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE SUBJECT, PRESIDENT NIXON'S SHAKY HOLD ON OFFICE AND FEARS THAT HE MIGHT BE OVER-ANXIOUS TO SCORE AN OSTENSIBLE DIPLOMATIC

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